

The Circuit Writer



NEWSLETTER OF THE COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
Northern New Jersey Conference, The United Methodist Church

Spring 1979 - Number 13

"Let the Men and Women Sit Apart"

by Dr. Kenneth E. Rowe

Early Methodists often fought each other as pugnaciously as they battled the sinner! Perhaps our most delightful civil war raged during the mid-nineteenth century over the propriety of allowing men and women to sit together in church. In all Methodist churches prior to 1848 the two sexes occupied opposite sides of the sanctuary, and whom the church had separated, no man dared join together, lest he himself be put asunder!

From the first discipline of 1784, patterned after Wesley's "Large Minutes" of the British Conference, until 1848 this question was put and answered:

"Ques. 'Is there any exception to the rule, Let the men and women sit apart?'

Answ. 'There is no exception. Let them sit apart in all our churches.'"

Our first two Bishops, Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury, in their notes on the Discipline published in 1798, simply assert that such an arrangement was "the universal practice in the primitive church." Citing I Corinthians 14:40 (Let all things be done decently and in order) they concluded: "A general mixture of the sexes in places of worship is obviously improper."

New Jersey Methodists kept Wesley's laws faithfully until the middle of the nineteenth century when women and men looked longingly across church aisles and devoutly preferred closer contact during worship services. Grimly the old guard conservatives vowed to suppress this viscious heterodoxy. The love for separate seats dies slowly, but the democratic way finally prevailed and churches gradually adopted "promiscuous" seats free to all.

Viewed through modern eyes the struggle seems fantastically whimsical, exhausting energies which might better have been employed in worthier causes. To New Jersey Methodists, however, the controversy was intimately tied to sacred tradition and their love for a well-ordered, disciplined church. This seemingly trivial episode, contains clues to a better understanding of the motivations and the class consciousness of Methodists of the pre-Civil War days. Equally important, the drama, fascinating in itself, portrays one growing pain of a rapidly maturing adolescent church coming of age.

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING OF HISTORICAL SOCIETY

May 15, 1979

The Rev. Dr. Robert Drew Simpson, pastor of the United Methodist Church in Chatham, will address the annual dinner meeting of the Historical Society of the Northern New Jersey Annual Conference Tuesday evening, May 15, 1979 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held in the United Methodist Church in Madison. Dr. Simpson's topic will be "Freeborn Garrettson: American Methodist Pioneer."

Reservations at \$5.00 per person are available through May 9 to: The Rev. Paul E. Spiecker, 452 Lafayette Ave., Hawthorne, N.J. 07506. (427-0725) Please make checks payable to: Paul E. Spiecker.

GIFT OF HYMNBOOKS SWELL RESEARCH COLLECTION AT DREW

The Methodist collection at Drew University Library has received a major addition in the form of 57 hymnbooks, including a rare tune book published by John Wesley in 1765. The gift of Charles M. Hogate, Jr., of Upper Montclair--a Drew alumnus who directs economic planning for S.B. Penick & Co. of Lyndhurst--the collection was assembled by his father, a pastor in the Southern New Jersey Conference for 36 years, including 21 years with the congregation in Manasquan.

The collection ranges from several rare Wesley hymnals through several camp meeting and antebellum revival hymnbooks and a rare little Civil War soldier's hymnbook, down to the standard 20th century revisions. The Rev. Charles M. Hogate, Sr., who died in 1950, was a lover of hymn music. A native of Camden, he was crippled from youth by infantile paralysis; nevertheless he earned a law degree from Temple University and remained physically active throughout his life, frequently refereeing high school athletic contests.

LOCAL CHURCH HISTORY CONTEST - Awards to be presented during 1979 Conference

Five local churches - Cokesbury, Demarest, Dover, Englewood, and Haverstraw - have submitted histories of their churches published during the calendar year 1978 for our sixth annual LOCAL CHURCH HISTORY RECOGNITION CONTEST. Two awards will be presented during the 1979 meeting of the Annual Conference in June.

If your church plans to publish a history of your local church in 1979, we urge you to enter it in next year's contest now. Large or small, pamphlet or cloth bound, mimeographed or printed, all histories printed during 1979 are eligible. Each history will become part of the Conference's permanent collection. MAIL ONE COPY TO: Dr. Kenneth E. Rowe, Drew University Library, Madison, N.J. 07940 by February 1, 1980.

RETIRED AND RETIRING PASTORS

Have you made your tape of reminiscences and your very best sermon for the Conference Archives? If not, contact Paul Spiecker, Hawthorne, for details. Phone: 427-0725.

TRAVELING EXHIBIT ON BISHOP FRANCIS ASBURY

A small exhibit of Asbury memorabilia from the collection of Drew University is available on request for use at special celebrations in local churches. The exhibit includes several mounted prints and photographs, a set of ordination certificates signed by our first Bishop, along with a pair of spectacles he wore. When used with historical items from a local congregation, this makes an attractive addition to an anniversary or other historical observation. Contact Dr. Kenneth E. Rowe, Drew University Library, Madison, N. J. 07940. Telephone: 377-3000, Ext. 470.

CELEBRATING THE HERITAGE

BUTLER A service of rededication and mortgage burning was held on Sunday November 26, 1978, beginning with a congregational dinner for approximately 250 persons. In the church library and the Otterbein Room, an historical display was prepared by Mrs. Jessie DeGraw, local

church historian, and Mr. Fred Traflet. This display featured old scrap books, pictures of the original church in Bloomingdale, and also slides of the de-consecration service of the Old Tabernacle and the building of the new sanctuary. The service of worship followed in the sanctuary in which Bishop White preached and District Superintendent Robert Grant dedicated the memorials. Two former pastors, the Rev. Dr. J. Mark Odenwelder and the Rev. John Bickerstaff, also participated in the service.

EAST During their recent annual church conference the Calvary-Roseville
ORANGE Church honored three of their members in recognition of their loyal service to the church. Each of them has been a member of the congregation for over fifty years--Mr. Harold L. Lewis, Dr. Benjamin E. Shackelford, and Miss H. Marjorie Wilson. All three were presented certificates of appreciation for their years of loyal service to the Church by the Rev. John R. Dexheimer, Eastern District Superintendent.

OTHERS? CELEBRATING THE HERITAGE is a regular column in our newsletter. Won't you share your plans or report on historic celebrations in your church? Please contact the editor and give us your story!

OCEAN GROVE TO BE SCENE OF SPECIAL, ONE DAY ONLY, HAND CANCEL

The Historical Society of Ocean Grove, New Jersey is proud to sponsor the second, one day only, pictorial hand cancel post mark as a part of the Eleventh Annual House Tour.

This special hand cancel celebrates the One Hundredth Anniversary of Ocean Grove's first fire department--The Washington Fire Company, Number One.

A special philatelic cover will be cacheted with a print of The Washington Fire Company's Clapp and Jones Pumper of 1886 while at the scene of a hotel fire in Ocean Grove, circa 1918. A history of The Washington Fire Company, Number One will be printed on the card insert.

The pictorial cancel, designed by artist Laura Batkin, measures 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 3- $\frac{3}{4}$ ". From left to right the cancel contains a bulls eye with the designation, "Beersheba Station" (the Historical Society's Logo), the date, July 13, 1979 and the town, Ocean Grove, N.J. 07756. This is followed by a graphic rendition of The Washington Fire Company's first pumper--an 1886 Clapp and Jones Pumper. The legend on the fire hose reads, "Washington Fire Co. No. 1 100th Anniversary."

Also available will be a special, limited edition of 11 x 14 prints of the scene from the cachet of the Clapp and Jones Pumper of 1886 at the scene of an Ocean Grove hotel fire.

A Special Events Postal Station will be set up on July 13, 1979 with the co-operation of the Ocean Grove Postmaster, Lester W. Bush, the local postal personnel and the United States Postal Services. All philatelic or fire fighter memorabilia may be cancelled on a "hand-back" basis providing the correct postage has been affixed to the materials.

It is planned to have an old fire fighting apparatus on display in front of the Ocean Grove Post Office. The House Tour is anticipating having The Washington Fire Company, Number One as a part of the Tour.

On July 13, 1979 covers will be available at \$1.00 each. Anyone desiring to purchase a serviced cover by mail, at \$1.50 per cover, or advance House Tour tickets at \$4.00 each (children under 12 years not permitted) may order through:

Victor R. Burke
Historical Society of Ocean Grove
P. O. Box 446
Ocean Grove, N. J. 07756

Please make money orders or checks payable to:

Historical Society of Ocean Grove.

Please include your address and zip code for prompt return of all orders.

ORDER THESE RESOURCES
FROM YOUR
NORTHERN NEW JERSEY ANNUAL CONFERENCE
COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

Because postal rates have increased so greatly,
we must increase the prices of the items listed below.

PRICE NUMBER
INCLUDING ORDERED
POSTAGE
Please DO NOT use
earlier order blanks

**GUIDLINES FOR LOCAL CHURCH HISTORIANS AND
RECORDS AND HISTORY COMMITTEES**

compiled by Dr. Walter N. Vernon

A 40 page manual for Local Churches. Indispensable!
(was \$.75 - postage now \$.48)

\$ 1.20

SERVICES AND RESOURCES FOR WORSHIP ON HISTORIC OCCASIONS

compiled by The Rev. Dr. Kenneth E. Rowe

Important resource for planning historical services
(postage now \$.48)

\$ 2.00

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE METHODISTS, by Jesse Lee

A facsimile reprint of the First Edition of the
FIRST history of Methodism in America.

Originally published in Baltimore, Md. in 1810
(was \$6.95 - postage now \$.48)

\$ 7.40

**THE CIVIL WAR DIARIES OF JAMES B. FAULKS and
THE PERSONAL DIARIES OF JOHN SUMMERFIELD COIT**

narrative version written by

The Rev. Dr. Henry Lyle Lambdin

publication date, June 5, 1978

\$ 2.50

BRONZE GRAVE MARKERS for UNITED METHODIST MINISTERS

Official Markers for the graves of United Methodist Ministers

The Bronze marker contains a raised figure of a mounted

Circuit Rider and the inscription "United Methodist Minister"

It may be bolted to the headstone or implanted in the ground.

(Bolts ARE NOT included.)

(was \$16.00 - postage now \$1.50 - insurance \$.50)

\$ 18.00

PAYMENT ENCLOSED

TOTAL \$.....

Please make all checks or money orders payable to Paul E. Spiecker

NAME.....

Date rec'd.....

ADDRESS.....

Am't.....

CITY.....STATE.....ZIP.....

Check no.....

Date sent.....

Send this order form with payment in full to:

The Rev. Paul E. Spiecker

452 Lafayette Avenue

Hawthorne, New Jersey 07506

Please use new address
after July 1, 1979

Revised 3/1/79